

**CENTRAL SIERRA PLANNING COUNCIL
CENTRAL SIERRA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

Counties of: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne
Cities of: Amador City, Angels, Ione, Jackson,
Plymouth, Sonora, Sutter Creek

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December 4, 1997

Judy Heath, Environmental Program Manager
CalFed Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1148
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SUBJECT: CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM UPPER
WATERSHED COORDINATION

Dear Ms. Heath:

It recently came to our Governing Board's attention that the CalFed Bay-Delta Program staff is in the initial stages of identifying local multi-county agencies who might be in a position to assist the Program with the coordination of upper watershed activities in the Sierra Nevada mountain range. Furthermore, it is our Board's understanding that initial discussions have occurred between CalFed Bay-Delta Program staff and the staff of the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) to determine that agency's interest in coordinating upper watershed activities which would be conducted through Resource Conservation Districts (RCD) who are members of the CARCD.

On the surface, this appears to be a logical approach to addressing a CalFed identified need to coordinate upper watershed activities through one agency. However, it should be noted that not all jurisdictions (i.e., Counties and Cities) in the Sierra Nevada mountain range have RCDs within their boundaries. While Amador County has an RCD which covers all of Amador County (and portions Alpine and Calaveras Counties), the Counties of Alpine, Calaveras and Tuolumne do not have Resource Conservation Districts. Unfortunately, the CARCD coordination effort would not appear to be a viable alternative for three of the four Counties in the Central Sierra Nevada mountain range.

The significance of this circumstance can be exhibited by examining the upper watersheds which are contained within Alpine,

Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties. The major watersheds which directly feed the Delta, and which are located in the four Counties, consist of the Cosumnes River (also adjacent to El Dorado County), Mokelumne River, Calaveras River, Stanislaus River, and Tuolumne River. Obviously, the ecological health of these major watersheds directly affect the ecological health of the Delta and Bay areas.

And yet, there is an absence of an identified multi-county agency which can provide the coordination of watershed activities within these major Delta tributaries (as noted above, the CARCD does not have member RCDs in Alpine, Calaveras or Tuolumne Counties). In reviewing this situation at their December 3, 1997 meeting, the Governing Boards of the Central Sierra Planning Council, the Central Sierra Economic Development District, and the Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Area Council, made the following observations:

- 1) CalFed Bay-Delta Program staff have expressed a desire to fund upper watershed work in the Sierra Nevada mountain range; and, that Program staff do not have the time to work individually on this effort with single RCDs or Counties.
- 2) CalFed Bay-Delta Program staff have determined that one approach to funding upper watershed work involves providing a watershed coordinator position to a multi-jurisdictional agency who would act as a conduit between the CalFed Bay-Delta Program and local jurisdictions where the major tributaries to the Delta are located.
- 3) Of the four Counties which contain the upper watersheds of the Cosumnes, Mokelumne, Calaveras, Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers, only Amador County has an active RCD. Alpine, Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties would not be within the geographic coverage area of CARCD since those Counties do not have RCDs which are members of CARCD.
- 4) At the present time, there appears to be no multi-county agency which has the geographic coverage of Alpine, Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties (and whose mission includes multi-county natural resource planning), other than the three "Central Sierra agencies" (Central Sierra Planning Council, Central Sierra Economic Development District, and Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Area Council), all of whom have interlocking Governing Board members composed of members of County Boards of Supervisors, City Councils, Native Americans, Resource Conservation Districts (Amador County RCD), and private sector citizens.

5) Since November 1996, the Central Sierra agencies have been involved with identifying an approach to upper watershed restoration on the major rivers located in the Central Sierra Counties as part of the agencies' 1997-98 program of work. (A copy of the Governing Board's adopted 1997-98 program of work, which includes the description of "A Role for the Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Area Council in Forested Watershed Restoration", is attached).

6) In the apparent absence of an identified multi-jurisdictional agency to act as a conduit and oversight agency for upper watershed projects being considered under the CalFed Bay-Delta Program in the Central Sierra Nevada geographic area, the Governing Boards should offer to work with Program staff to determine the feasibility of the Central Sierra agencies filling that role.

In order to initiate item number 6, the Governing Board authorized Mr. Frank Jerauld, Governing Board Member, to contact CalFed Bay-Delta Program staff to begin this process. Mr. Jerauld has volunteered his time and efforts to implement this Governing Board authorization and he will be contacting you in the near future to establish a meeting date with you at your offices. Mr. Jerauld has informed the Governing Boards that he will report back to the Boards on the results of his meeting with CalFed Bay-Delta Program staff at the Board's next monthly meeting to be held on January 7, 1998.

By way of introduction, I offer the following information on Mr. Jerauld's background in natural resource issues in the Central Sierra area. Mr. Jerauld has been a proactive Governing Board member of the Central Sierra agencies for several years. He has been a driving force in the establishment of the Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Area Council, and he has as established working relationships with local National Forest representatives (Stanislaus, Eldorado and Toiyabe National Forests), the State office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture, and the California Association of Resource Conservation and Development Area Councils (not to be confused with CARCD). In addition, Mr. Jerauld is an active Board Member of the Amador County RCD and has had active membership in the High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Area Council (a RC&D Area Council which encompasses Counties to the North of the Central Sierra RC&D Area Council). He has been instrumental in developing an upper forested watershed restoration strategy for the Central Sierra agencies.

As additional background, I offer the following information as a brief summary of the Central Sierra Planning Council, the Central Sierra Economic Development District, and the Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Area Council:

The *Central Sierra Planning Council (CSPC)* is an active "council of governments" formed under the provisions of State law for joint powers of agreement agencies. It is a quasi-governmental organization composed of four Counties (Alpine, Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne) and seven Cities within those four Counties (Amador City, Angels, Lone, Jackson, Plymouth, Sonora and Sutter Creek). The Council is composed of all elected officials (elected representatives of County Boards of Supervisors and City Council members). It has been active since 1973.

The *Central Sierra Economic Development District (CSEDD)* is an active economic development district also formed under the provisions of State law for joint powers of agreement agencies. It is also a quasi-governmental organization composed of the same local jurisdictions which formed the Central Sierra Planning Council. Its Board membership consists of the same elected representatives who sit on the Central Sierra Planning Council, plus four non-elected Citizen Members who are appointed by the County Boards of Supervisors. It is an authorized Economic Development District under the provisions of the Economic Development Administration, US Department of Commerce. CSEDD has been active since 1976.

The *Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Area Council (CSRC&D)* is provisionally recognized by the State office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture, as an active Resource Conservation and Development Area Council. Full authorization for the CSRC&D is presently pending in the national office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service. This authorization is expected in early 1998. The Governing Board of the Central Sierra Economic Development District is also the Governing Board for the CSRC&D.

The three agencies maintain a combined staff of seven professionals who carry out the directives of the Governing Boards for the three Central Sierra agencies. Funding to provide for the staff is obtained from Federal and State sources as well as the local Counties and Cities who comprise the three agencies.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the three Central Sierra agencies are always on the look-out for opportunities to form partnerships with Federal, State and local agencies to accomplish common goals. A partnership with the CalFed Bay-Delta Program may be such an opportunity.

If I can answer any questions, or address any comments you may have, I can be contacted as follows:

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Thank you in advance for taking the time to meet with Governing Board member Frank Jerauld.

Sincerely,



Larry Busby
Executive Director